

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BUENOS 07709 192222Z

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 7709

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJECT: DIVISIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN GOVERNMENT

REF: BA 7554, BA 7213

1. SUMMARY. WHILE REAL POWER RELATIONSHIPS CAN ONLY BE DEFINED OVER TIME ON BASIS OF CLOSE OBSERVATION, NEW DECREES AND INTERPRETATIONS SUGGEST THAT SOLANO LIMA WILL BE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR INTERNAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS, THAT MINISTER OF ECONOMY GELBARD WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE GREAT POWERS IN HANDLING THE ECONOMY, AND THAT LOPEZ REGA WILL HAVE UNIMPEDED ACCESS TO PERON. IT DOES NOT, IN SUM, APPEAR THAT SOLANO LIMA HAS CUT OUT OTHER TWO - TO DISAPPOINTMENT OF HIS FOLLOWERS. ALL THREE, HOWEVER, REMAIN RIVALS OR AT LEAST MAJOR POLES OF POWER WITHIN GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY

2. DECREE ISSUED OCT 18 RESTRUCTURES OFFICE OF SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY, PROVIDING IT WITH GREATER POWERS. SPECIFICALLY, IT CREATES FOUR NEW SECRETARIATS WHICH WILL OPERATE UNDER SOLANO LIMA: LABOR, INTERNAL POLITICS, YOUTH AND DEFENSE. WHILE REAL POWER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LEADING FIGURES IN GOVERNMENT CANNOT BE DEFINED SIMPLY BY DECREE, INTERPRETATIONS

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PAGE 02 BUENOS 07709 192222Z

GIVEN BY PERONISTS TO OCT 18 FIAT IS THAT SOLANO LIMA WILL HAVE

GENERAL COORDINATING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL MINISTRIES, BUT THAT HE WILL HAVE SPECIFIC OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MINISTRIES SUGGESTED BY FOUR NEWLY CREATED SECRETARIATS. HENCE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS INTERPRETATION, MINISTERS OF DEFENSE, INTERIOR, LABOR, EDUCATION AND JUSTICE WILL IN FACT (IF NOT DE JURE) BECOME SUBORDINATE TO SECRETARY GENERAL OF PRESIDENCY. APPARENTLY, HOWEVER, ECONOMY MINISTER GELBARD WILL REMAIN LARGELY INDEPENDENT. IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT THERE IS NO NEW SECRETARIAL FOR THE ECONOMY. SOCIAL WELFARE MINISTER LOPEZ REGA, MOREOVER, WILL ALSO REMAIN LARGELY INDEPENDENT, AND ON BASIS OF FACT HE HAS BEEN CONFIRMED AS PERON'S PERSONEL SECRETARY WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO PERON WITHOUT REFERENCE TO NEW COMMAND LINES THROUGH SOLANO LIMA'S OFFICE.

3. WRINKLE WHICH AS YET NO ONE HAS BEEN ABLE COMPLETELY TO DEFINE HAS TO DO WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS. SOLANO LIMA FOLLOWERS (SEE BA 7489) HAD EXPECTED THAT THEIR CHIEF WOULD BE GIVEN PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS AREA AS WELL AS IN INTERNAL POLITICS. THAT, HOWEVER, HAS NOT BEEN THE CASE AND IT WAS SOMETHING OF A SURPRISE TO THEM THAT FIFTH NEW SECRETARIAT, FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WAS NOT CREATED. INTERPRETATION WITHIN PERONIST INNER CIRCLES IS THAT PERON HIMSELF INTENDS TO TAKE LEADING ROLE IN FORMULATION OF FOREIGN POLICY, SECONDED, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING, BY FOREIGN MINISTER VIGNES.

4. INTERESTINGLY, EX-ARMY LIEUTENANT FRANCISCO LICASTRO HAS BEEN NAMED SUBSECRETARY FOR INTERNAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS. (COMMENT. THIS IS PROBABLY SMART POLITICAL MOVE. LICASTRO APPEARS TO HAVE MODERATED HIS STANCE SUBSTANTIALLY IN PAST FEW MONTHS AND MAY NO LONGER BE FIRE EATING LEFTIST - AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, HE IS ACCEPTABLE TO LEFT WING. QUESTIONED BY A NEWSMAN ON PURGE OF MARXISTS, LICASTRO ANSWERED, "IT ALL DEPENDS UPON WHETHER ONE IS A REAL MARXIST OR SIMPLY A MARXIST OF THE KIOSKS." THIS SQUARES WITH EARLIER INTERPRETATIONS - SEE BA 7213 - WHICH INDICATED THAT PERON'S PURGE OF MARXISTS WAS AIMED MORE AT EXTREMIST ELEMENTS AND AT PLACING LEFT WING IN PROPER CONTEXT THAN AT RIDDING MOVEMENT OF ANY AND ALL LEFTISTS. LICASTRO HIMSELF IS PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THIS. HE HIMSELF IS A LEFTIST. THE LOOSE INDISCRIMINATE TERMINOLOGY APPLIED BY SOME PERONISTS MIGHT LUMP HIM IN WITH MARXISTS. BY HIS OWN DEFINITION, HOWEVER, HE IS NOT REAL

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PAGE 03 BUENOS 07709 192222Z

MARXIST. HENCE, PURGE DOES NOT APPLY TO HIM.) OTHER THREE SECRETARIES - I.E. FOR YOUTH, LABOR AND DEFENSE HAVE YET TO BE NAMED. ENCOURAGINGLY, HOWEVER, SOLANO LIMA'S SECOND IN COMMAND IS MODERATE CAREER DIPLOMAT. FRANCISCO JOSE FIGUEROLA OF FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD TO CANCEL LUNCH WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS TODAY, OCT 19, IN ORDER TO BE SWORN IN AT 1330 HOURS AS UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY. HE HAS BEEN AND APPARENTLY WILL CONTINUE TO HOLD POST AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PLANNING IN FOREIGN

MINISTRY.

5. COMMENT. IT THUS APPEARS AT THE MOMENT THAT SOLANO LIMA WILL HAVE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERNAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS, INCLUDING RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIAISON BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES (LATTER WILL FALL LARGELY TO LICASTRO). PERON AND VIGNES WILL HANDLE FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND GELBARD WILL CONTINUE TO RUN THE ECONOMY. ISABELITA (HENCEFORTH TO BE REFERRED TO AS MARIA ESTELA MARTINEZ - ISABELITA IS HER STAGE NAME WHICH PERONISTS ARE TRYING TO PLAY DOWN) AND LOPEZ REGA WILL TAKE CARE OF SOCIAL WELFARE, AND LOPEZ REGA, AS PERON'S PRIVATE SECRETARY, WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE LATTER'S EAR ON ALMOST ALL MATTERS. IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT ALL MAJOR DECISIONS WILL BE PERON'S.

6. INTERESTINGLY, THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT GELBARD AND LOPEZ REGA, FORMERLY RIVALS, ARE BEGINNING TO JOIN FORCES (AGAINST SOLANO LIMA?). EX PRESIDENT LASTIRI, A LOPEZ REGISTA, IS NOW TOURING US WITH GELBARD'S SON (AND PROBABLY AT GELBARD'S EXPENSE). ONE OF EMBASSY'S CLOSE CONTACTS WHO IS CLOSE TO LOPEZ REGA, MOREOVER, TOLD EMBOFF THIS WEEK THAT WHEREAS LOPEZ REGA HAD PREVIOUSLY SUGGESTED HE TAKE HANDS-OFF ATTITUDE TOWARD GELBARD, FORMER HAS NOW SEVERAL TIMES ORDERED HIM "TO MOVE CLOSER" TO LATTER.

LODGE

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